ADVICE

TO THE

LADIES.

A

SATYR.

Some country-girl, ſcarce to a curt'ſey bred,
Would I much rather than Cornelia *wed.*

DRYDEN'S JUVENAL.

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PREFACE.

WHether the author's deſigns were benevolent or ill-natured, in the writing or publication of this piece to the world, it is unneceſſary for him to diſcover; for even though he ſhould, with all imaginable candour, expreſs the motives which influenced him, every one will preſume upon the ſame right of judging as if no ſuch diſcovery had been made. Permit him therefore only to ſay, that this ſatyr is neither abſolutely perſonal, nor comprehenſive of all. To attack any particular character, is no leſs detraction in verſe than in proſe; or ſuppoſe the intention more good-natured, it is confining thoſe moral leſſons to one, which may be applicable to a thouſand. To attack any ſex or ſpecies for qualities inſeparable from it, is really to write a ſatyr againſt Nature. So that the buſineſs of one who would aſſume a character ſo delicate and unwelcome, is neither to confine himſelf to individuals, nor attempt to include the whole.

The author thought it proper to convey his ſentiments in an epiſtolary way, that the eye might ſtill

ſtill be directed to one principal figure. Such characters and paſſions as could not thus properly be introduced, are brought in by frequent digreſſions, with as much eaſe as poſſible. For this I need only inſtance the characters of FLAVIA *and* TIMANDRA.

The moſt effectual way either to gain or preſerve the attention of readers in ſatyr, is by a delicate and well-preſerved irony. This the author has as ſeldom violated, as the ſubjects he treated, and his own warmth of temper, would permit. And thus, under pretence of adviſing, he expoſes to his pupil moſt of the vices and foibles of the ſex; firſt, in their earlieſt appearances in the world, then in marriage, as miſtreſſes of a family, as mothers, and the different rules too often obſerved in dreſs abroad and at home. This account of our author's plan was thought requiſite, leſt the reader, when glancing over the poem, might loſe himſelf in it.

A. G.

ADVICE

ADVICE to the LADIES.

Inſcribed to Miſs ———

Credo pudicitiam, Saturno rege, moratam
In terris, viſamque diu. ——— JUV.

In Saturn's reign, at Nature's early birth,
There was that thing call'd *chaſtity* on earth.

DRYDEN.

O Thou, whom ſtill in vain I muſt adore,
To Beauty much in debt, to Fortune more,
With wit and taſte enough thy faults to hide,
To gild thy folly, and to plume thy pride;
Soon ſhall my heart, a rebel to thy chain,
Aſſert its freedom, and thy pow'r diſdain.
Yet ere kind Fate my liberty reſtore,
(When twice five hundred pounds can charm no more),
For thee the Muſe ſhall tune th' inſtructive lay,
And thro' the maze of life direct thy way:
The Muſe, long ſtudy'd in her ſex's art,
The head deſigning, and corrupted heart,
For thee ſhall ſing; nor thou too raſhly blame
The laſt faint ſtruggles of a dying flame.

THE maid whom Nature with maternal care
Has form'd to ſcatter ruin ev'ry where,
When firſt on life her radiant eyes ſhe throws,
Dreſs, flatt'ry, pleaſure, billet-doux, and beaux;
Then, conſcious of her weakneſs, let her fly
The tender liſp, the love-illumin'd eye;
Let her alike diſtruſt her ſtrength and art,
And cautious to ſome maiden aunt impart
Th' important charge, her honour and her heart.
But ſoon the firſt emotions of deſire
Shall with ſimplicity and truth retire;
The conſcious tongue, inſpir'd by diſtant views,
Its firſt alliance with the ſoul ſhall loſe;
The blood by candor taught before to glow,
From other motives to the cheeks ſhall flow;
No more ſhall looks her ſentiments explain,
But ev'ry flexile feature learn to feign.
Then let her iſſue forth to open light,
In all the blaze of native beauty bright;
Inſatiate, conqueſt let her ſtill purſue,
Secure from harm, and deſtin'd to undo.
Yet while the firſt of public toaſts ſhe reigns,
While half the nation ſtruggles in her chains,
If not like thee, with Fortune's bounty bleſt,
Let her at laſt reſign the world to reſt,
Ere Time his empire o'er her charms aſſume,
And tinge with fainter hue her native bloom.

In vernal youth, and beauty's gayeſt pride,
The charming Flavia thus becomes a bride.
For what bleſs'd youth, O Muſe, with truth declare,
Could Fate reſerve the conqueſt of the fair?
To what reſiſtleſs art, what charms divine,
What ſoft addreſs, could ſhe her heart reſign?
Did youth, good-nature, ſenſe, inflict the wound?
"No — peeviſh ſeventy with five thouſand pound."
Hail holy ties! by wondrous charms endear'd,
The paralytic nerve, and hoary beard.
What mighty joys muſt bleſs ſuch equal love,
When hand in hand gay Spring and Winter move?
Beneath the ſpecious ſemblance of a wife
She flaunts a licens'd proſtitute for life.
Why all this hurry? Flavia was afraid
Her fame ſhould wither, or her beauty fade.

Favour'd of Heav'n, far happier ſtars are thine,
Long as thy wiſh ſhall thy meridian ſhine,
In youth or age ſtill certain to command,
And ſee thy bloom coeval with thy land.

There is a time to all the ſex well known,
When 'tis a wretched thing to be alone;
When pregnant Night with ghoſts and ſpectres teems,
And ſportive fairies prompt tumultous dreams;

Then tho' no lower wiſh thy breaſt inflame,
Though ſpotleſs be thy fancy as thy name,
In ſolitary fears no longer pine,
But to protecting man thy charms reſign.
What though he ev'ry night, deny'd to reſt,
Grow to thy lips, and languiſh on thy breaſt?
Thence ſhall thy purer thoughts no tincture take,
The ſoul may ſlumber, though the ſenſes wake.

And now, before the raptur'd ſwain ſhould cloy
With known embraces, and repeated joy;
Now is the time thy wit, thy pow'rs to ſtrain,
And teaſe him ſtill ſome fav'rite boon to gain.
Now with eternal tempeſt ſtun his ears,
Now vary all the ſcene with fits and tears;
Now (pleas'd to view viciſſitudes of pain,
To view thy tyranny new force obtain)
To all his tender arts and ſoft purſuit
Still be thy tongue inexorably mute.

Nor yet thy plagues to one alone confine,
Portending public ruin comets ſhine;
Angle for hearts, and when you catch the prey,
Long on the line your fooliſh captive play.

If e'er alone you with your lover meet,
With ſoften'd coyneſs, and reluctance ſweet,

Juſt

Juſt yielding, melting, dying in his arms,
At once defenceleſs ſeem to leave your charms:
Then, when to plunge in ecſtaſy he flies,
And ardent hopes to faint fruition riſe,
In all the thunders of thy wrath exclaim,
And teach thy eyes to ſhoot vindictive flame;
Scream loud for aid, while from his promis'd prey
The baffled hunter ſtarts with rage away.

But ſhould thy fond officious fool be near,
With jealous looks, and with attentive ear;
Should he on ev'ry private hour intrude,
And watch thoſe pleaſures he was meant to ſhroud;
With all thy ſkill his jealous rage ferment,
The look inviting, and the ſoft complaint;
With equal favour ev'ry lover bleſs,
The gentle whiſper, and the fond careſs;
Till the weak dupe, in every tender ſenſe,
Feels, more than hell, the torture of ſuſpenſe.
Then if he dares to murmur at his fate,
Tell him with ſmiles, repentance is too late.
But if with haughty tone, and lordly pride,
He dictates ſerious rules thy life to guide;
With weeping eyes, and melting ſounds, regret
The deſtin'd ſorrows which on woman wait;
To tyrant man ſubjected during life,
A wretched daughter, and more wretched wife;

Alike unbleſs'd, whate'er her form inſpire,
Licentious ridicule, or low deſire;
She pines away a life to bliſs unknown;
A ſlave to ev'ry humour but her own;
While with deſpotic nod, and watchful gaze,
Her jealous maſter all her ſteps ſurveys:
With ſtrict reſerve each lover if ſhe treat,
Then all her portion is contempt or hate;
But if more free ſhe ſpend the chearful day
Among the witty, innocent, and gay,
From all her hopes domeſtic pleaſure flies,
Suſpicion breathes, and lo! her honour dies.
Such cruel ſtars on woman ſtill attend,
And couldſt thou hope their fury to ſuſpend?

PERHAPS ſome lover may thy ſoul inflame,
For nature in each boſom is the ſame;
Then, but by ſlow degrees, his fate decide,
And gratify at once thy love and pride.
For love and pride, beneath each dark diſguiſe,
Heave in your breaſt, and ſparkle in your eyes:
Howe'er your ſex in chaſtity pretend
To hate the lover, but admire the friend,
Deſires more warm their natal throne maintain,
Platonic paſſions only reach the brain.

THOUGH in the cloyſter's ſecret cell immur'd
By bolts, by ev'ry name in heaven ſecur'd;
Though in the cloſe ſeraglio's walls confin'd;
Ev'n there looſe Fancy riots on mankind:
In vain your forms are by your lords poſſeſt;
Another image on your ſouls impreſt,
Juſt in the trembling criſis of delight,
Charms with a varied object ev'ry night.

SHOULD Love at laſt (whom has not Love ſubdu'd?)
Full on thy ſenſe ſome killing form obtrude;
O! then beware, nor with a laviſh hand
Too promptly offer, ere thy ſwain demand.
Our mothers, great in virtues as in crimes,
Diſdain'd the venal ſpirit of our times:
Vice, oft repell'd, their ſtubborn hearts eſſay'd;
But if at laſt their yielding ſoul ſhe ſway'd,
Nor hopes, nor fears, nor int'reſt could reſtrain,
Heav'n charm'd, hell threaten'd, av'rice brib'd in vain.
Fools they, and folly's common lot they ſhar'd,
Inſtinct their guide, and pleaſure their reward:
Their wiſer race purſue a happier ſcheme,
Pleaſure their inſtrument, and wealth their aim;
Nor maid, nor wife, unbrib'd, her heart beſtows,
Each dart is tipp'd with gold which Cupid throws.

THUS

THUS ſhould the dice invite thy ventrous hand,
Or debts of honour freſh ſupplies demand;
Should china, monkeys, gems thy heart engage,
The gilded coach, or liv'ry'd equipage:
Half meet, half ſhun his wiſh; nor free, nor nice;
Delay the pleaſure, to inhance the price.

WHILE Night o'er heav'n and earth extends her ſhade,
And darker female cunning lends its aid,
Then, but with art, thy ſchemes of pleaſure lay,
Leſt Argus with his hundred eyes ſurvey:
For gales officious ev'ry whiſper bear,
Each room has echoes, and each wall an ear.
Yet Jealouſy, oft fann'd with opiate airs,
Her charge abandons, and forgets her cares;
While Love awake exerts his happy pow'r,
And conſecrates to joy the fated hour.

THAT well-concerted plans command ſucceſs,
Learn from TIMANDRA's fortune, and confeſs.
The clock ſtrikes ten, in vain TIMANDRA mourns,
Supper is ſerv'd, no huſband yet returns.
Not yet return'd! Good heav'n avert my fear;
What unforeſeen miſchance detains my dear?
Perhaps in ſome dark alley, by ſurpriſe,
Beneath a villain's arm he murder'd lies;

Or by ſome apoplectic fit depreſt,
Perhaps, alas! he ſeeks eternal reſt,
Whilſt I an early widow mourn in vain.
Haſte! fly, ye ſlaves, reſtore my lord again!
She ſpoke, ſhe ſhriek'd aloud, ſhe rung the bell,
Then ſenſeleſs, lifeleſs, on the couch ſhe fell.
Say, Muſe; for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor hell's deep track; ſay, what could then enſue?

LORENZO, touch'd with ſympathy divine,
Heard the ſhrill ſound, and recognis'd the ſign;
He came, he ſpoke, and, if report ſay true,
Her life rekindled, and her fears withdrew.
The lover vaniſh'd, and the tumult paſt,
The unſuſpecting huſband came at laſt;
The ſpouſe with equal joy his tranſports crown'd,
Nor on her lips were CASSIO's * kiſſes found.

LET Scandal next no ſlight attention ſhare,
Scandal, the fav'rite ſcience of the fair,
O'er which her fancy broods the ſummer-day,
And ſcheming waſtes the midnight-taper's ray;
The laugh ſignificant, the biting jeſt,
The whiſper loud, the ſentence half ſuppreſt.
The ſeeming pity for another's fame,
To praiſe with coldneſs, or with caution blame;

* See *Othello*.

Still ſhall thy malice by thoſe arts ſucceed,
And ev'ry hour a reputation bleed.
Thus ſhall thy words, thy looks, thy ſilence wound,
And plagues be wafted in each whiſper round.

Nor on theſe topics long let Fancy dwell;
In one unite the pedant and the belle:
With learned jargon, ever miſapply'd,
Harangue, illuſtrate, criticiſe, decide.
For in our days, to gain a ſage's name,
We need not plod for ſenſe, but baniſh ſhame:
'Tis this which opens every fair-one's eyes,
Religion, ſenſe, and reaſon to deſpiſe;
'Tis thus their thoughts affected freedom boaſt,
And laugh at God, yet tremble at a ghoſt.
Truth is the object of each common view,
The gazing croud her naked beauties woo;
The fair ſuch manners ſcorn, but, brave and free,
Are damn'd for ſacred ſingularity.

Thee with a mother's name ſhould Fortune grace,
And propagate thy vices in thy race,
Let whim, not reaſon, all thy conduct guide,
And not the parent, but the rod preſide:
In all thy ſteps each wide extreme unite,
Capricious tenderneſs, or groundleſs ſpite.
Hence future ages ſhall with triumph ſee
Bridewell and Tyburn both enrich'd by thee.

To

To this our lives their hapleſs tenor owe,
Ting'd with the poiſon'd ſource from whence they
flow.
Ah! me, had gracious Heav'n alone conſign'd
A prey to burning wrath your worthleſs kind;
Or had the firſt fair ſhe, to hell ally'd,
Creation's ſole reproach, curs'd Heaven and dy'd;
Nor introduc'd in Nature's faultleſs frame
The wretched heritage of guilt and ſhame.
Such the maternal pledges you beſtow,
Expreſſive earneſts of eternal woe.

STILL as a conſtant curſe regard thy home,
Thy pleaſure's penance, and thy beauty's tomb;
Now mad with rage, now languiſhing with ſpleen,
There ſtill in wretched deſhabile be ſeen:
Long let thy nail its poliſh'd jet extend,
Around thy neck thy greaſy locks deſcend;
While from thy flowing robes the fragrant fume
Of perſpiration breathes through all the room;
And round thee, mingling in one ſpicy gale,
Kitchen and nurs'ry all their ſweets exhale:
Hence ſhall thy ſpouſe, where-e'er his charmer goes,
Delighted trace thee with ſagacious noſe.

BUT if in more extenſive ſpheres you move,
With all the glare of dreſs your form improve;

To

To aid its pomp let either India join,
Nor once reflect at whoſe expence you ſhine;
New airs, new faſhions, new complexions try,
While paint and affectation can ſupply.
For Heaven and Nature, uniform, and old,
One ſettled courſe in each production hold;
But belles, by native genius taught to pleaſe,
Correct their Maker's want of taſte with eaſe.

But why this haſty rage, this ſudden fright?
I meant to counſel, and you ſay I bite.
Ah! no, Heav'n knows 'twas far from my intent;
The world's too much a ſinner to repent:
By its example taught, I change my view,
And ſwear the fair are right whate'er they do.

FINIS.